

Quigley's
Washington, D.C.

An Honor's Project (HONRS 499)

by

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Purpose of Project

This collection of photography depicting Washington, D.C. is representative of what a summer intern might experience . While these are events and instances that anyone visiting Washington, D.C., could see, not everyone takes the time to stop and appreciate the city's uniqueness. Without going extensively in to the subject, this project relates the differences and likenesses between the Nation's political capitol and the cities that each of us hails from.

Artist's Statement

As a magazine and photojournalism major, I thought my Washington, D.C., experience would serve to kill two birds with one stone. I would get the opportunity to work for a national publication where I would become a published magazine writer, and I would also complete my honors project - an outsider's inside look at our nation's capitol through photography.

This, I found, was an admirable ambition but one that was not to come to the climax that I had hoped it would. I shot all summer using both black and white and color films. By the time my internship had come to an end, I felt I had what would prove to be enough photos to solidly and uniquely depict Washington. Unfortunately the many rolls of film containing these images, as well as much of my camera equipment, was stolen when our van was broken into on August 8. However, I did not realize this until well into the fall semester when I had what I believed to be film of Washington, processed and discovered that most of my Washington film was gone.

Upon this discovery, I made arrangements to return to Washington at Thanksgiving for a one day "shooting spree." The changing of the seasons from summer to early winter had brought a change in lighting that I had no control over. The flowers were gone, the trees were bare and the Mall was occupied by a mere fraction of visitors it had seen during the summer. These differences were not necessarily to my disadvantage. Instead, they provided a challenge and add another dimension to my exhibit. The mixing of the photos from the two seasons gives more of an overall impression of the city throughout the year.

I feel that the photos I have selected represent a fairly wide cross-section of life in Washington, D.C. Tourists, their children, the homeless and

that which is not commonly seen in "Farmland, U.S.A.," this is actually what D.C. is about. Sure, it has more than it's fair share of politicians but we all know what most of them look like (if you're not sure, check the dictionary under "weasel.") This exhibit was never intended to have a message or a meaning, it was simply to show life in Washington, D.C. It wasn't meant to make viewers think...necessarily, it was meant to be enjoyed and to provide a better understanding of life as it happens in our nation's capitol, the good, the bad and the funny.

My reaction to the project really has no effect on it's success. My belief is that I set out to accomplish a goal that I set for myself at the beginning of last summer. Through some twists and turns and with a slight variation, I have finally arrived at the end and I am satisfied with the finished product.

The Memorials of Washington, D.C.

Some of the biggest attractions in Washington, D.C., are the monuments. While all are popular, the two which seem to receive the most attention are the Washington Monument and the Viet Nam Memorial.

The Washington Monument sits like a security guard between the Capitol Building at the east end of The Mall and the Lincoln Memorial at the west end. During its construction, progress was halted due to a temporary lack of funds. This is evidenced by a difference in the color of the brick part-way up the obelisk.

The monument itself is only minimally impressive compared with the view from the top. Not only can one see all of Washington, D.C., but also parts of Maryland and Virginia.

The Viet Nam Memorial stands as a nation's permanent remembrance of an event that many refused to acknowledge when it came to an end. The Viet Nam War, or Conflict, left many without members of their families. The most prominent image in most everyone's mind is that of the fallen soldier - a male soldier. This is true to an extent. Recently, however, it was acknowledged that women died for their country in this conflict as well. Visitors to the Womens' Viet Nam Memorial realize this role.

For some, simply viewing either of these memorials brings waves of pain and sorrow. Those whose relative's names appear in black granite on the Wall, rarely finish walking the length dry-eyed. Often many families take the chance to leave one last letter to their family members

Homelessness/Panhandling

If one can consider the problem of homelessness in a city such as Muncie with an approximate population of 76,000, imagine this problem in a city the size of D.C. On almost every corner, in almost every section of the city there are cardboard boxes and/or beggars, their faces hidden behind crude cardboard posters claiming them to be homeless and hungry, but good people - just down on their luck.

Others offer a product in exchange for cash. Directions and basic tourist information about the city are their products. Whether they're quality products or not is determined by whether or not the purchasers arrive at their desired destination or the perfect souvenir.

Miscellaneous

Walking on The Mall is something that natives, and tourists alike, indulge in when they have a free minute. And the weather is not an issue - unless of course it's raining, because when it rains in D.C., as the saying goes, it quite literally pours.

On Dupont Circle near The National Trust for Historic Preservation (where I interned for the summer) old and young, black and white gather to enjoy their lunch hour with a friendly game of chess. This daily occurrence would almost appear as an ongoing tournament to an outside visitor.

Sure, we all know what the Domino's Pizza delivery guy looks like and that he drives around in a car. Sure, that happens in the Midwest, but the rules change when you're in a bustling city. If pizza places were to deliver by car, they may never turn a profit, it would take forever to get through traffic. Domino's in D.C. has found away to get around the problem of traffic. They deliver by bicycle.

Being from the Midwest we are all familiar with the image of a corn field. However, ours are not usually on a small triangle of soil in the middle of the city. This corn field, as the sign indicates, is a mere three blocks from Union Station - directly behind the Capitol building.

For small children taking the walking tour of the city with their parents is interesting...for a while. When the history and importance of buildings become boring, a flock of seagulls on The Mall behind the Washington Monument provide a great distraction.

Not usually considered actual monuments, there are many house museums. Most of these museums are operated by the National Trust For Historic Preservation and include homes of Stephen Decatur, a United States Navy Admiral and that of President Woodrow Wilson. (Photo from the latter.)

Waiting in line is a past-time in the nation's capitol. There is no exception when one wants tickets to tour the White House. The line forms on the Elipse just behind the President's home and usually goes three-quarters of its perimeter - by 7 a.m. For this tourist attraction, the weather is of no factor. Those wanting one of the limited number of tickets will stand in the line refusing to budge even if it's raining. These two boys found a way to make the best of a doubly bad situation.

This sign, unfortunately, does not indicate my ownership of the tavern in which it hangs. I quickly discovered that Quigley's Tavern is a favorite hang-out of the American University crowd as it's in walking distance. After going once, I understood why it was a favorite, the food and the atmosphere were both great.

QUIGLEY'S

Washington, D.C.

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*A collection of images designed to
pose the question, "Is Washington,
D.C. all that different from the cities
we hail from?"*

by Samantha Quigley